

GRAPEVINE PUBLIC LIBRARY POLICY ON UNATTENDED OR DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN

The Grapevine Public Library welcomes children to use its facilities and services. However, responsibility for children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or assigned chaperon, not with library personnel.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN

For the purpose of this policy and as defined in Chapters 11.1 and 51.02 of the Family Code of the State of Texas, a child is any person under eighteen years of age.

Preschool-age children (children six and under) may not be left unattended in the library; they must be accompanied by a teenager or an adult. Responsible parties not attending a storytime with a preschooler must remain in the library.

Children ages seven and older may use the library unattended, subject to other policies and procedures adopted by the Grapevine Public Library concerning behavior, conduct, and demeanor.

If a child under eighteen years of age is left unattended in the library and it is thirty minutes or less until closing time, or if an unattended child becomes distraught (visibility upset while left unattended), library staff may, if necessary, use the following procedures in order to resolve the situation.

1. Try to identify the child and locate the parent or responsible person by walking through the library with the child and/or page the child's parent using the parent's name or the child's name. If no name is available, describe the child's physical appearance.
2. If the parent is not located within thirty minutes (ten minutes if the library is closing), library staff will attempt to locate the parent/guardian by telephone, utilizing library records, telephone directories, or other sources available, if necessary.
3. If after exhausting all sources, no contact has been made with the parent/guardian, the staff member will call the Police. A librarian should stay with the child until the proper authorities arrive. Under no circumstances is staff to transport the child to another location.

Children who remain outside the library at closing are not necessarily covered by these procedures unless, depending on the circumstances, it is apparent to staff that a child is distraught or in obvious trouble. Staff may use the preceding procedures and best judgment in dealing with such situations.

DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN

Disruptive behavior is any behavior on library premises which infringes on the rights of others using the library. Disruptive children will not be allowed to interfere with library service to others. Disruptive children will be approached in the following manner by the staff:

1. Give verbal warning to the child indicating that such behavior is disruptive to other library users and is unacceptable. Staff may skip to the procedure listed under 3 below if circumstances warrant.
2. If the disruptive behavior continues, approach the parent/guardian with the same warning. If the child is unattended, give the child a second warning.
3. If the disruptive behavior still continues:
 - a. Request the parent/guardian to escort the child from library premises.
 - b. If the child is unattended and twelve years of age or older, ask the child to leave library premises.
 - c. If the child is younger than twelve years of age and unattended follow the procedures outlined under **UNATTENDED CHILDREN** above.
4. If the child's disruptive behavior continues and he/she refuses to leave library premises, or if the parent/guardian will not escort the child from library premises, library staff will call the Police.

Library staff will document any incidents involving unattended or disruptive children and submit an irregularity report.